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Chief, Intelligence Information Staff

12 February 1957

ATTN

THRU : Acting Chief, Industrial Division  
Acting Chief, Consumer Industries Branch

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Comments on Enclosure 8 to State,

Moscow

Reference: St/I/R memorandum of 31 January 1957

1. I/CI uses general material on the availability of consumer goods to evaluate official Soviet data on production and retail sales of consumer goods. For this reason, reports of extreme shortages as evidenced by bare shelves, long queues, or unofficial rationing, and reports of great surpluses are of considerable value. Reports such as the subject report which indicate neither shortages nor surpluses are likewise of value.

2. Of particular interest in the present report are the comments on the availability of radios and TV sets. These comments are of value in interpreting the large decline in the rate of increase in the production of radio and TV sets in 1956—a decline which suggests that the 1960 goal will not be fulfilled and that high prices may limit consumers' willingness and ability to buy.

3. The reporter keeps in mind the principle that price information to be most useful should specify time, place, particular commercial outlet, brand, and quality of good.

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